

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the Claims as follows:

---Claims 1-11. (Cancelled)

---Claim 12. (Previously amended) A cross-linked hyaluronic acid derivative according to Claim 18 wherein the hydroxy groups of said hyaluronic acid derivative are sulphated or hemisuccinylated.---

---Claims 13 and 14 (cancelled)

---Claim 15 (previously amended) A pharmaceutical composition useful as (a) a substitute for synovial fluid in the treatment of osteoarthritic conditions and for vitreous humor in the treatment of pathologies and side effects connected in ophthalmic surgery; (b) as a base for artificial tears formulation; (c) as a controlled release matrix of a medicament; and (d) as a healing and anti-adhesive agent, in which the principal active ingredient is a cross-linked hyaluronic acid derivative according to Claim 18.

---Claims 16 and 17 (cancelled)

---Claim 18 (currently amended) A hyaluronic acid derivative comprising cross-linked molecules of hyaluronic acid obtained by the reaction of the carboxylic acid groups of a hyaluronic acid wherein the cross-linkage occurs only through amide bonds between carboxy groups of the hyaluronic acid and the ~~amide amino~~ groups of a diamine of the formula $\text{NH}_2-\text{A}-\text{NH}_2$ wherein A is a linear C_2-C_6 chain or a polyoxyalkylene chain of the formula $[(\text{CH}_2-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2)_2]_m$ wherein m is an integer from 2-10.

--19 (Previously added) A hyaluronic acid derivative according to Claim 18 in which the C₂-6 chain is optionally substituted by hydroxy, carboxy, halogen, alkoxy and amino groups, a polyoxy-alkylene chain $[(\text{CH}_2)_2-\text{O}-\text{CH}_2)_2]_m$ in which m is an integer from 2-10, 1,4 or 1,3 disubstituted benzene; and R₁ and R₂, which are the same or different, are hydrogen, C₁-C₆ alkyl, phenyl or benzene groups.